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"For too long the 'Model Minority' stereotype has hidden the reality that there are underserved families in our Asian and Pacific Islander communities," said Rep. Honda. "There are many unskilled and linguistically isolated workers in our community who struggle to build networks outside their ethnic enclave. This important report sheds light as to why so many Asian American and Pacific Islander families struggle with unemployment. CAPAC has met with cabinet members in the Obama Administration, including Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. We will continue to ensure that the voices of AAPI workers are included in national policymaking."

According to a data analysis done by the Economic Policy Institute more than half — 51.7 percent — of unemployed Asians 16 years old and above have been out of work for 27 weeks or longer, compared with 45.8 percent for all workers.

"I am deeply disturbed at the recent report that a greater percentage of Asian Americans remain unemployed the longest among minorities," said Rep. Judy Chu. "This new data finally gives us the support we need to move our issues forward on the federal level. I plan on working with federal agencies to make sure unemployment services, job training programs and workforce services have culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach, Asian language access and better data collection."

According to the report, contributing factors for high unemployment numbers include the fact that the Asian American and Pacific Islander community is made up of both highly educated and unskilled workers. Over 70 percent of the population is foreign born. These workers tend to live in language isolated ethnic communities and focus on specific industries. During a downturn, Asian Americans lack the networks to find jobs outside their community and are more prone to longer term job loss.

CAPAC has developed an agenda to work with federal agencies on the unique challenges faced by Asian American and Pacific Islander communities including language access, cultural and linguistically appropriate outreach, and disaggregated data collection.

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